

“New & Improved” occupations



What new jobs are emerging in the U.S. labor market?

Ever wonder what new occupations are being created? Are you looking for jobs on “the cutting edge?” The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provides information about new and emerging (N&E) occupations.

According to the OES survey, in 2001, most new and emerging occupations were in smaller firms—those with fewer than 100 employees. No single industry dominated in the creation and growth of these occupations. However, the West is creating the most N&E positions—the Southeast, the fewest.

Construction

New building systems, particularly in commercial construction, and increased use of new materials explain the appearance of new occupations in the traditional construction industry.

Educational Services

Some of the N&E occupations in education arise in connection with the objective of tailoring educational services to students' special needs. Others deal with the use of improved telecommunications applications to deliver education. Technology and its general uses in education explain the creation of other specialist occupations. In addition, governmental regulations governing athletic and other physical education programs have contributed to other occupations in special education and the administration of athletic programs.

Health Services

In the health field, N&E occupations have addressed specialized patient care, continuing responses to advancing medical technologies, improved scheduling of surgical procedures, and alternative medical service delivery approaches. Increased attention has been directed toward management and care of tissue banks. In light of recent genome developments, genetic counselors are appearing upon the medical scene.

Social Services

Nurses continue to be employed in areas other than healthcare, primarily to control medical costs. Information management, like nursing, is not a new field, but one that continues to appear in a number of new industry settings such as social services. Senior and disabled persons are creating situations calling for cheer workers who provide opportunities for therapeutic interaction and others who investigate charges and complaints of mistreatment. Drivers qualified to deliver hazardous materials may provide oxygen to residences and other service locations. Providing services for the insulation and heating of residences has created occupations in weatherization and heating cost recovery. Finally, increased awareness of disaster preparedness is driving the creation of related positions.

Transportation

Clearly "carriage driver" is not a new occupation; however, it appears in connection with the development of urban entertainment districts. Attention to the mobility needs of the handicapped has contributed to the creation of aide occupations to assist them on buses.


Services

A variety of service occupations are appearing. Some deal with security needs. Others reflect cultural attitudes about future uncertainties or finding a mate. The continuing drive to improve the efficiency of manufacturing operations through improved material management has created specialist positions. Increased attention to docks and ports has created highly specialized underwater inspection jobs.

Pay special attention to the Internet and telecommunications technologies. A variety of new specialized occupations continue to appear as a result of advancements.

Engineering Services and Manufacturing

New materials and processes have contributed to the creation of new occupations while the regulatory concern for the associated environmental and health impacts of these have created additional occupations. Lasers and various optical technologies continue to create new occupations.

Some occupations are not new but are once again emerging due to consumer preferences. For example, the cultural resurgence of neon lighting has created the need for neon benders. Other occupations that are not new but are emerging in engineering and sciences include translators as manufacturers' foreign markets and contacts increased. Maintenance and renewal of the national defense capabilities is associated with the expanded presence of missile specialists. 

Advice From the Utah Department of Workforce Services

Just because a job is "new" and "emerging" does not mean there are a lot of these jobs right now. In fact, we're not absolutely certain there will ever be a large number of openings in any of these jobs. However, it does provide insight to how existing jobs are evolving and what incumbents might face in the future. It may also be helpful for people making long-term career decisions to see what types of skills may be required in the future. And it is interesting.

Note: The above article is a summary of research conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The research in its entirety can be found at: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2003/may/emerging.pdf>